

Rev 12:7-17

"By the Blood of the Lamb"

9-27-

15

Prayer: Ps 9:7-10

V 7, "Now war arose in heaven. Michael & his angels fighting against the dragon, & the dragon & his angels fought back. But he [the dragon] was defeated, & there was no longer any place for them in heaven." As a result of this defeat, says John, "the great dragon was thrown down— that ancient serpent, who is called the devil & Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, & his angels were thrown down w/ him." X's victory over the devil is anticipated in Lk 10:18, when Jesus sent the 72 on a mission trip & says, "I saw Satan fall like lightening from heaven." This is the same event described by John in Rev 20, when the thousand years (the millennial age) begin. "& I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss & holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, & bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, & locked & sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time." Therefore, having been defeated by JX, Satan is cast down to the earth, banished to the abyss, bound by the preaching of the gospel, & now he is enraged because his days are numbered. But like a mortally wounded animal, Satan is more dangerous now than ever. As a result of Satan's defeat, heaven resounds w/ the sounds of victory. V 8 tells us that Satan & his angels lost their place in Heaven. So let's see why they were thrown down from Heaven. V 10 "& [John says] I heard a loud voice in heaven saying: 'Now -that means that now

that Satan has been cast out of Heaven, now comes ***the salvation & the power & the kingdom of our God, & the authority of His X.***" In other words, Heaven proclaims that the Kingdom of God has arrived in the fullness of its salvation power. This Kingdom is here. What has been prophesied for generations has now arrived in reality. But why now? Because the lingering impediment to the realization of the kingdom has been taken away. Look again at v 10 "*Now the salvation & the power & the kingdom of our God, & the authority of His X has come, for the accuser of our brothers, has been thrown down, who accuses them day & night before our God. & they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb & by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O Heavens & you who dwell in them! But woe to you O earth & sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!*" In Greek the name devil means slanderer & treacherous informer & the name "Satan" means Adversary & Accuser. The word "Satan" is actually a legal term & was used of a person who brings an accusation against someone else in a court of law. & what is in view here is God's tribunal in Heaven where Satan seeks to bring an indictment against the people of God. Satan is the great accuser & his accusations express themselves in 2 directions. Before God, Satan says, in effect, "How can You possibly forgive these rebellious people, who shake their puny fists in Your face & scoff at Your authority & worship other gods? How can You let them off the hook? This is a massive reproach to Your dignity & honor. Are you truly holy? Are You truly just? Or is it that after all, sin does not really matter? Then Satan turns to us & sticks his finger

in our face & says, "you are not much of a Xan are you? I see thru your façade. Down deep inside, there is a bitterness & greed & resentment & envy & lust & self-promotion & pride. I see the nice little games you play at church; the formality of your worship; the way you passively defy the commandments of the Bible; the way you despise your brothers & sisters in the congregation; how little you love & how little you give; the resentfulness in your service to X & His Church. Oh, there may have been great saints of old, but you are certainly not one of them. Who do think you are? You do not deserve to go to Heaven & you will be damned forever in Hell." Satan is the accuser of God's people. Is there any possibility of overcoming these accusations & the condemnation they deserve?

Rev 12:11 tells us that the answer is yes. V 11 "& they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb & by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." Beloved, make no mistake about this, Satan has no mercy & he will always accuse us. But hear me now: Satan can no longer enter Heaven & make accusations against believers in X! Why not? Because of the finished work of X on the cross when He made atonement for our sins. & now believers conquer the Devil by the blood of the Lamb. All our sins have been paid in full, & since X's blood washes them & removes every hint & trace of sin Satan can no longer rightfully accuse us of any sin. God Himself has cleansed us from our sins. Xans no longer have the fear of death, nor do we fear Satan, who can kill the body but cannot destroy our souls. But, as John warns his reader, woe to the earth, for the Devil has been cast down, & he is furious because his time is short. So John returns to describing

the battle which rages on the earth between Satan & the woman. This time as the battle takes shape after Satan is cast down from heaven. V 13 "*when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.*" (Having failed to destroy X, the Dragon tries to destroy the people of X.) v 14 "*But the woman was given the 2 wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the place prepared for her in the desert, where she is to be nourished for a time, & times, & half a time.*" Again, the symbols John uses draw upon OT images of the Exodus. In Ex 19:4, the Lord says to Israel, "*You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, & how I carried you on eagles' wings & brought you to myself.*" As YHWH had done for Israel, so now He does for the woman, preserving her in the wilderness for the now familiar period of 3 1/2 yrs, this time spoken of as "a time, a times & half a time." Enraged by his defeat & his impending doom, & frustrated by his inability to overcome the woman or her offspring, John describes Satan opening his mouth & "*spew[ing] water like a river, to overtake the woman & sweep her away w/ the torrent.*" The image is not literal, but is symbolic of Satan spewing a flood of "deceitful words out of his mouth. Recall that in Rev 1:16, John had described a sharp sword coming out of the mouth of the Son of Man. This, of course, was not a literal sword, but was symbolic of the power of God's word, able to divide bone from marrow. So this picture means that since Satan is not able to conquer the church directly, he will attempt to deceive. Therefore, the serpent (dragon) opens his mouth & imitating the powers of the Son of Man, spews forth his own deceptive word to deceive the people of

God, symbolized by a great flood. 2 Thess 2:9-10 "The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan w/ all power & false signs & wonders. & w/ all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth & so be saved." This is the spirit of antichrist which has already gone forth into the world to deceive the people of God through false teaching & which was already plaguing the churches described in the 7 letters of Rev 1-3 & 1 Jn 2:18 which says, "*many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.*"

Now back to our text- Because the woman sought refuge in the safe place prepared for her by God, God will protect her. So we read in v 16, that "*the earth came to the help of the woman, & the earth opened its mouth & swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth.*" Here again, John's mysterious language makes perfect sense in light of several OT texts. In Num 16 we read that the ground opened & swallowed the false priests of Israel, God's judgment on those who sought to deceive his people. As soon as Moses finished speaking in vss 31-33, we read, "*the ground under [the priests] split apart & the earth opened its mouth & swallowed them... & the earth closed over them, & they perished...*" As the ground swallowed Korah's men alive, so too, God will ensure that the flood of Satanic lies will not overwhelm the church.

& there are covenant promises to be considered here as well. In Isa 43:7 God promises His people, "*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze*" (43:2).

Therefore, when we take refuge in X & in His cov promises, Satan's lies are of no avail. Satan is defeated by the truth. & after being frustrated 2 times, v 17 "*Then the dragon became furious w/ the woman & went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God & hold to the testimony of Jesus.*" So when deceit fails, Satan tries his persecuting power. The dragon will now wage his battles through the agency of the beast-those anti-Xan governments who persecute the church- & who, at times, are allowed by God to wage war upon the saints. The story of the God-hating & blasphemous beast is our subject next time, when, Lord willing, we turn to Rev 13.

Beloved, let us be mindful of what God says to X's church- Jesus tells to that we must face the rage of Satan after he is cast down to the earth. Despite the Devil's rage, he cannot defeat us! On the contrary, [we] "conquer the devil *by the blood of the Lamb & by the word of [our] testimony; [we] did not love [our] lives so much as to shrink from death.*" In other words, the blood of the Lamb is the ground, the basis upon which the accusations of the devil are nullified. After the res of X God says to Satan: "I have presented Jesus as the propitiation for their sins. My wrath has been satisfied by His great sacrifice, & I have done this to be both just & the justifier of the ungodly. You have no basis for your accusations. My holiness remains untainted. Forgiveness is rightfully theirs. Hold your tongue! & so Rom 8:32 says, "If God is for us who can be against us? Who can bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? XJ who died- more than that, who was raised to life- is ruling & reigning at the right hand of God & "He ever lives to pray for His

sheep." Hear me Satan! My Son has died for them. Back off! Their sin debt has been paid in full thru the suffering of My Son & punishment for their sins has been exacted. Here again we are reminded of the weapons God has given to us which equip us for this great struggle. God has given us the gospel—the power of God unto salvation—which announces to us that X has died for our sins & that he has been raised for our justification. Since the guilt of our sins has been removed—X paying our debt in full—Satan's accusations have no merit.

In the courtroom of God's justice, Xan have an advocate, a defense attorney who submits the all-sufficient evidence of His own suffering in our place, thereby invalidating the accusations of the accuser. & practically speaking, because of what JX has done for us, the prosecutor, the accuser, has, as it were, been disbarred. Stan has been cast down. He has lost his place as the accuser of the God's people because of JX & our attachment to JX thru faith. No longer can he accuse us before God. Sin no longer has any hold upon us. Its power over us is broken. The penalty has been paid in full. The truth of the gospel has set us free.

& since JX has conquered death & the grave in His res, we have no reason to fear death. For even if the beast or Satan is permitted to take our lives, we come to life & reign w/ X. Then we take our places before the throne, & join that multitude so vast they cannot be counted as we await the res at the end of the age. Beloved, John's point is simply this. We conquer the evil one & all his works by the blood of the Lamb. That is why we do not fear the sword or the sword of the beast, nor the lies of the Devil. In fact, we do not even fear death itself. Through the shed blood & triumphant res of JX, we

have already conquered all our enemies. TBUG! Closing Hymn # 517

Benediction: Zeph 3:17 "The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you by His love; He will exult over you w/ loud singing." TBUG! Amen.